361 313 sets it on fire. Two or three days later the giants of the forest topple one after another amidst an indescribable din and the joyous cries of the natives. The brushwood is quickly cut up and branches and crowns are lopped off. The large logs are left where they fall.

Nothing is more interesting to see than these barely

Fig. 22. Corner of a Batitu Village Barely Outlined.

outlined villages in the midst of the great equatorial forest. The clearing, still poorly defined, is framed by a dome of wild greenery over this small open spot where man has decided to settle. The whole clearing is strewn with thick trunks, pieces of wood, charred wood, and rubbish of all sorts. Stumps, cut about one meter from the ground, rise on every side, like so many relics of a life and vegetation recently passed away. Amidst this tortured heap of debris 341 a few very crude huts left and right, as though scattered 342 completely at random. They are really nothing but shelters, places of refuge, where the native spends the night for the time being, protected from dampness and inclement weather. Their miserable appearance, their ramshackle exterior, and the roughness of their construction

show [37] that the native has built them in great haste, without attaching any importance to them. He nevertheless lives there until a more permanent hut is built, and this provisional state of affairs sometimes lasts quite a long time.

These initial shelters are built without order or method. An odd

Fig. 23. Longinipila, a Batitu Village Newly Erected in the midst of the Equatorial Forest.

assortment of materials are used. The shape of the huts varies, and, curiously enough, it usually bears no resemblance whatever to the ultimate dwelling or to the shape typical of the region.

Among the Bateke and Babuende [Bwende], the hut is rectangular and on the average is twice as long as it is wide. The very low side walls are rarely higher than 1.50 meters. The door is cut into the gable end, placed a little to the side, opening on the large village square. The roof slopes away on both sides in a curve from a horizontal ridge. Its edges project considerably beyond the side walls and form a small protective roof all around the outside of the hut. The native uses this protected area to store part of his firewood supply, pottery, and other objects of lesser value.

All the huts are built separately and spaced from 10 to 15 meters apart. They stand parallel to each other, facing the main thoroughfare. [38]

S
341 The conical huts are not arranged in family groupings, but are built along an irregular double line. The free space between the two rows of huts forms the principal artery of the village, and the whole assemblange is surrounded by luxuriant plantings of banana trees and manioc.

M
342 The dwellings of the Baboma, Wadia, Mosengere, and all the peoples along the right shore of Lake Leopold II and the Fimi have the same appearance: rectangular base; roof with an oblique double slope, horizontal ridge; triangular gable; veranda formed by the projection of the roof from one to one and a half meters beyong the façade which faces the chief artery of the village; and an entrance through this same wall with a raised, sliding door.

M
352 The furnishings of all these huts are in general limited to

S
[346]

Fig. 26. Baboma Hut for the Nkisi of the Hunt. In background, Basonge type hut with conical roof and square base.

kitchen utensils and a storage place in the first room and to the bed in the sleeping chamber. The bed is built on stakes from 30 to 50 centimeters high. Mats serve as a mattress, and the pillow consists
S
[352] of a crude wooden block which has hardly been squared, except among the Baboma who still use the small stool-pillow that we found among the Banfumu-Bateke.

M
342 All the peoples of this region build their huts with great care. After carefully marking the area of the new site, the native drives

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● 342 in three large stakes to support the main crosspieces. Then he builds the vertical framework of his hut by planting strong, straight stalks all around the perimeter, 70 centimeters apart. To these vertical stalks, the native attaches horizontal crosspieces made of strong raffia stems and spaced from five to seven centimeters apart. The same method is followed for the interior partition, although weaker and thinner raffia stems are used. The space reserved for the door is left open. At this stage, the dwelling resembles a large cage, [32] fully open to the sky, with its bars

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342

M
[853
576]

Fig. 27. Hut of the Wadia and Mosengere.

arranged horizontally. It remains in that state all through the period of time required to prepare the materials that will line the interior walls. To this end, the native cuts leaves of the nse-nse, a very common type of palm throughout this swampy region. The leaves are assembled in groups of four, the fronds having first been folded in along the rib and roughly braided. The free ends are tied with a fine thong, and the ribs are bound together at intervals of five centimeters. Once the leaves have been prepared, the native goes inside the hut under construction and begins to cover the walls. Proceeding systematically, he works from bottom to top, attaching the nse-nse leaves to the horizontal slats and placing them so that they overlap. When the wall has been covered, it is strengthened with a few slats placed vertically and tied to the outer framework

M
342 with rattan thongs. These walls are very strong and durable. The roof is usually covered with thatch, but it frequently happens that the native also uses panels of nse-nse to cover his hut. [43]

M
361 Among the peoples who live west of the lake, the huts are grouped in clusters of two or three and placed in two parallel lines. The free space between the clusters is very limited, so much so that at first sight all the huts seem to be continuous. The doors always open on the large street.

M
342 We also visited a number of villages where earthen dwellings,
177 built by administrative order, stretched out the whole length of the village. As a rule, however, these huts, which we regard as an
656 improvement from the standpoint of hygiene and comfort, were not favored by the natives. The Negro had carried out the task imposed upon him, but he refused to enjoy it. His primitive hut, which was better adapted to the necessities of his life, retained its appeal and its occupants.

M
361 Among the Tumba of the east shore of the lake, we observed
342 that the hut tends to present certain characteristics relating it to the type of hut with an arched roof found among the Buli [Oli] and farther north. The ridge, instead of being straight, extends beyond the ends of the hut and dips down, giving the whole structure the appearance of a bow bent [44] chiefly at the two ends. In certain dwellings the doors are placed in the side wall facing the main thoroughfare, and the huts are built in groups standing more or less close together. In other huts, on the other hand, the door is located in the gable wall and opens on a small veranda formed by the projecting roof front. The huts built this way are placed in a line, but are separated, and although the space between the two lines forms the chief thoroughfare of the village, each hut nevertheless boasts a small individual courtyard in front of the veranda. As to the method of construction, it is identical to those we noted in the region west of the lake.

M
S Among the peoples of the lower Lukenie, the huts are also
361 built by the same method and with identical materials. The door, however, is nearly always in the gable wall, at the end where the
342 roof projects, slightly curved, to form the veranda. When the huts are separated, one notices again a tendency toward an arc in the

ridge, although it is true that this is not very pronounced. It happens very frequently, however, that the natives help each other in building the village and proceed so as to form long lines of uninterrupted huts. [45] As a result, the ridgepiece is continuous and straight. The opening that serves as a door is in the gable wall and opens on a small empty space. This courtyard is common to two adjacent huts, but their doors are not placed face to face.

This type of continuous dwelling is found most frequently among the Basakata of the interior. It is characterized by the careful attention the natives give to its construction and completion.

As regards dwelling type and general village layout, all the peoples along the shores of Lake Leopold II and the banks of the lower Lukenie seem to belong to a single ethnic group characterized by the rectangular hut having a roof with an oblique double slope and a horizontal ridgepiece parallel to the village thoroughfare. The single huts, however, with slightly arched roofs and placed perpendicular to the main axis of the village, which we noted to the east of Lake Leopold II, reveal certain traces of an ethnic affinity with the peoples farther east. Before we proceed

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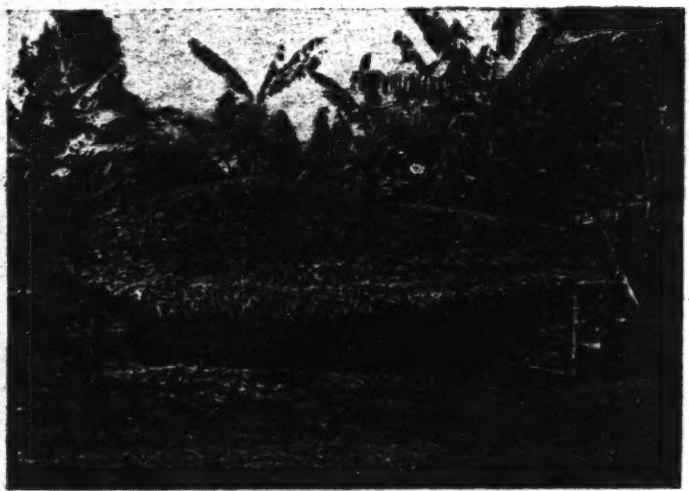

Fig. 28. Tumba Hut with Rectangular Base and Slightly Arched Roof.

Before we proceed

M 361 342 643 to the study of dwellings in that region, it is well to note that among all the western populations, the hut of the great chief, that is to say, the "chief of the [46] earth," Mfumu na Tse, is built separately, a little apart from the general alignment or facing the principal street. This hut is surrounded by a fence, and the enclosure contains the royal hut, the reception palace, and the huts of the chief's wives.

M 644 Entry into the chief's courtyard is forbidden to his subjects. Only the dignitaries are admitted there when royal audiences are held, and to receive them the chief holds court in the hut that serves as a reception building. All around the enclosure, the "chief of the earth" has special trees of the cactus family planted. This, we were assured by the future successor of the Mosengere chief of Penge, is a royal prerogative very strictly observed. The existence of this enclosure around the royal

S [342 415]

Fig. 29. Basakata Huts Connected by a Common Court.

dwelling recalls the custom in Banfumu villages of arranging the huts in family groups, and it seems to indicate a certain affinity between these different tribes.

M 342 In the region of the Ipanga-Batitu, besides the small hut whose roof has the oblique double slope and horizontal ridge and is covered with vegetal tiles, which serves as a secondary, temporary

1: Maes--30 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924 FO32 Mongo FO32
Yaelima

establishment, we find another type of hut reminiscent of the type found north of Lake Leopold II. The base is rectangular, but the front half forms an open veranda or one closed [47] at the sides. The interior of the hut is square. The roof is arched, with a more or less pronounced curve. After first having cleaned, beaten, and prepared the interior area, the native traces the outline of his hut and erects on the perimeter and the median line the supports for the main rafters. The central stake is 50 to 75 centimeters higher than those placed at the two ends. The latter are, on the average, one meter higher than the stakes of the lateral walls. The three stakes of the median line are connected by a strong horizontal crosspiece, and a second crosspiece is laid over this. The latter must form an arc. The curve is obtained by attaching very strong lianas to the ends, from

[415]

Fig. 30. View of the Interior of a Ypanga Hut.

which the native suspends very large wooden blocks. The roof is covered with raffia stems bent at dihedral angles and attached to the ridgepole and to the two horizontal crosspieces of the side walls. The spaces between the large wall stakes are filled in with smaller rods that are tied to the horizontal crosspiece. Upon this framework, the native ties raffia stalks, placed horizontally 15 or 20 centimeters apart. The gable walls are built in the

342 same way, but the tips of the vertical beams are attached to the crosspieces of the roof. The huts are covered with overlapping nse-nse by the same method as that used among the peoples of Lake Leopold II, or they are covered with the large ndele leaves that form vegetal tiles. The native proceeds to cover the roof before finishing the walls of his hut. The rows of nse-nse are fastened directly to the framework of the roof. The ndele tiles, on the other hand, are plaited into an openwork mat with the horizontally aligned holes very close together. The mat is spread over the framework of the roof and fastened to it. It often happens that the native covers the part of the hut that forms the bedroom with ndele and the roof of the veranda with nse-nse. When asked the reason for using such different materials on the same structure, Inunu, chief of the Batitu of the Oshwe territory,

Fig. 31. Batitu Huts with Arched Roof, Under Contruction.

explained to us that the ndele make good vegetal tiles which are tough and in which rodents cannot nest because of the thorns, sharp as needles, with which the leaf is covered. In the nse-nse, on the other hand, rats and mice settle quite willingly. They cut the leaves to make their nests and quickly reproduce there, unless they are driven away by smoke from the hearth. "That is why," said Inunu, "we prefer to cover with ndele that part of the hut where our wives set up their hearth." [48]

The walls are usually covered with ndele leaves or with panels

● 342 of tree bark. Walls of nse-nse are exceedingly rare.

The door of the hut opens on the interior of the veranda. The latter is always open on the side facing the main artery of the village. Sometimes it is open both in front and to one side; it is very rarely open on all sides.

In the Bokala region and in a very few Yaelima villages, we found this same characteristic type of hut. Such cases, however, were quite rare. Most often the huts in this area had an appearance

Fig. 32. Another Form of Batitu Hut, under Construction in the Village of Longinpila.

that reminded us of the Batitu type only by the presence of a veranda with a roof that was more or less curved in the extension of the main axis.

The Bokala-Yaelima hut has a rectangular base and a roof with an oblique double slope and a horizontal ridge.

The interior of the hut has two parts, one serving as living room, kitchen, and dining room, the other as the bedchamber. The door opens into the first part and is cut in the wall facing the main artery of the [49] village. All the huts are built separately and laid out lengthwise in such a fashion that two parallel rows make up the village. The huts are built with stakes and raffia stems for the framework and nse-nse to cover the walls as well

[361]

as the roof. The natives of the Bumbuli region usually build their huts quite carelessly. Although their villages are remarkably clean, the general appearance suffers a great deal from the shabby state of most of the dwellings. Even quite new huts are poorly finished, compared to those of other regions.

The furnishings of Batitu and Yaelima huts do not differ from those of other regions, except in the shape of the utensils and the presence of chairs. The bed is always very low, raised barely 10 or 15 centimeters from the ground. The interior of the hut is only very rarely lined with mats. Among the furnishings one should note the large drying basket which serves as a storage place and which is hung above the hearth. It is hexagonal in shape, and

Fig. 33. Temporary Hut of the Bokala-Yaelima.

its radius varies from one to one and a half meters. Its edges are straight, the thongs by which it hangs are attached to the six corners of the hexagon, and it is made entirely in an open-work weave like that [50] of the caned chairs of Europe, a special technique of which we found no other instances in the region. No less interesting are the chairs, relatively rare among the Batitu, common among the Bokala, and in daily use among the Yaelima. Their special form is characteristic. The natives sometimes take the utmost care to ornament them with carved designs, and the remarkably artistic appearance of certain ones

Yaelima
Wooden

give them in general a very interesting local ethnic character. One might say as much of the carved wooden cups, the engraved horns, and the vessels of artistically worked wood which up to now have been regarded as local to the region occupied by the Bakuba [Kuba] and which we found throughout the territory south of Wumbuli.

As a rule, the hut of the Bena Dibele-Kole region is much trimmer, it is constructed much more carefully, and the work is accomplished with order and method. The shape is rectangular, the roof has a double slope, and the ridgepole is slightly arched. This curve, however slight, is nevertheless quite characteristic

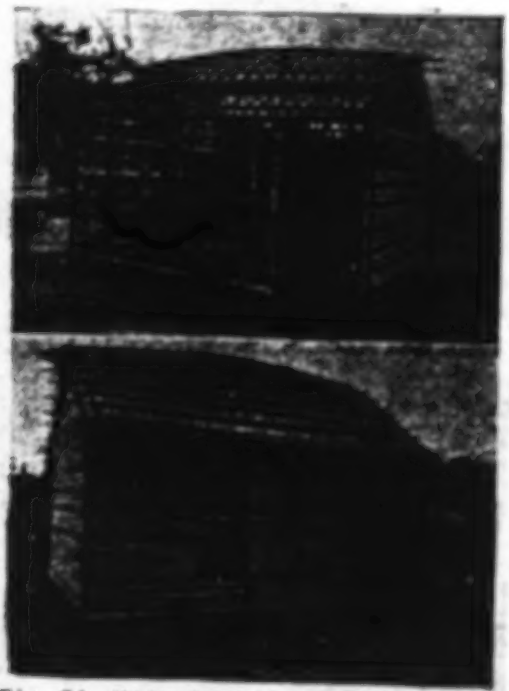

Fig. 34. (1) Bankutu-Bakuba Hut under Construction.
(2) Completed Bankutu-Bankuba Hut.

and quite constant. It is undeniably reminiscent of the typical form of the ancestral hut.

The door is located either on the side or in the gable wall, according to whether the hut is oriented parallel or perpendicular to

the main axis [51] of the village. This door is always placed rather high and closes on an inner slide. Since nse-nse and ndele are lacking in this region, the framework of the huts is made of stakes and pieces of raffia, and the walls and roof are covered with raffia leaves plaited flat in the form of a mat.

The huts are built singly, a method which again reminds one of the customs of the Oshwe-Bumbuli region. The native does sometimes cover his hut with grass, but this is very rare.

In this region we also observed that in certain villages the huts were arranged in family groupings and that each group had a special area clearly set apart from the rest of the village. The various huts of a single group are inside a fairly solid stake fence from one and three-quarters to two meters high and sometimes covered with mats of raffia leaves. The doors of all the huts within an enclosure open toward the interior of the courtyard.

Fig. 35. Interior of a Lupango and Drying Peanuts, Bena Dibele-Kole Region.

The whole forms the lupango. By counting the number of huts in a lupango one may determine how many wives the chief or head of the place has, since each one has her own home. [52] The lupango are of recent introduction and are derived from Arab influence. One cannot take them into account in establishing relationships of kinship or ethnic affinity between the different peoples. There is no connection whatever between the lupango of the Bena Dibele-Kole region and the familial grouping of huts

MS 258

Among the Mosengere, Bobaie, Basakata, Ipanga, Batitu, Bokala, and Yaelima, on the other hand, the natives still use the primitive process.

This varies according to the region, insofar as the materials used in the preparation are concerned.

Among the Mosengere, Wadia, Tumba, Basakata, and Bobaie, the natives use only the salt grass that grows abundantly in the marshes and along the marshy banks of certain rivers in the region.

In the territory of the Ipanga, Batitu, Bokala, and Yaelima, where this precious resource is lacking, the natives use the trunks of banana trees and especially the flowers of palm trees, whose ashes are quite rich in alkaline matter.

MS [361]

Salt grass is harvested toward the end of the dry season.

At this time groups of Mosengere, Wadia, Tumba, Bobaie, and Basakata of the interior leave their villages to camp along the rivers with marshy banks.

MS [362]

They choose a site suitable for setting up the few huts that will serve them as shelters during their temporary sojourn in the region. These huts are usually very poorly constructed. Built hastily and carelessly, they are provisional shelters, refuges for the night, rather than dwellings.

MS 258 423

In former times the whole expanse of the marshy plain covered with salt grass was divided into sections.

Each native group had its own well-defined area and exploited it exclusively. [107]

The site for the huts occupied by each such group was determined by the location of the familial reservation or domain and was chosen so as to lie in the center of it.

The time of year when the salt grass was gathered and the length of the period of exploitation were regulated. In short, the preparation of salt was a national industry, governed by special laws to which the whole tribe had to conform.

At the present time, the groups gather salt grass wherever they think best, without regard for the customs and rights of the past. This work of harvesting the grass falls to the women.

MS 257 462

While the men are fishing, the women, provided with large knives, cut down the tall grass that grows in the marshes or along

573x 574 ɔtswɛkɛ lɔfɔa ɔtswɛk'ɔlɛ, bɛfɔkɔlaka mbɔk'ɛy'ɔlɛ la ngɔm'a nkɔlɛ, "If you are married go back to your parents, or you will be taught the way with drums and gongs," that is, "when you are dead." (2)

[464] [604] [534]

2. A woman is buried in her own native clan. Her corpse is transported there to the accompaniment of drums and horns. The lokolɛ gong announces her death.

573x 602 A married woman may not evade the duty of helping her relatives under special circumstances (pregnancy, illness, serious accidents, death). This obligation [285] is not limited to her mother and father, but extends to all her relatives; the closer the degree of kinship, the stricter the obligation.

Besides, love of family is sufficiently developed so that there is no danger of the woman forgetting herself too much in this realm. [626] And a husband who would like to prevent her from fulfilling these elementary duties would be much criticized by all and should expect a dissolution of the marriage.

573x 574 ●342 532 It was said above that a husband builds a hut for his wife. His relatives often assist him in this task. But it also happened -- in the past, for colonization has removed the possibility of it -- that the woman's father wanted to build his daughter's house himself or at least to make the pavement out of clay brought from her native land. This act was a demonstration of wealth and politico-social importance as well as proof of fatherly affection. The husband, for his part, was honored to have married the daughter of such an important man and loved her all the more. Thus a number of women say that "they only cooked on ancestral soil." This soil was brought in baskets across distances up to 50 kilometers by Batswa and by men of the woman's clan or village. Her father could do it because of his great influence and regal rewards (bokɔndo, verb kɔnda) were distributed during a feast (mɛkɛ) given for the workers and their relatives after the task was completed. This was done for Bompeli, daughter of Bokombe of Litili (Bombwanja) married to Bonyeme w'enyuka of the Basɛkɛ Mbangɔ (Bonkoso); for Beluka, daughter of

Iongo of Bokákyá (Boselo, Bombwanja), married to Bokaa is Ifonda of Bowélé; for Mbalaka, daughter of Bolekela wa Imangaiso of the Basóká Lokuli (Bongili), married to Mbuli is'ea Wela of Bombóngo w'Etefa (Bongale) (1) [286]

1. She bore the name of Mbálaka (meaning indemnity), because her father had solemnly proclaimed (-békya) and publicly promised that he intended, one day, to place himself in the position of having to pay an indemnity because of his daughter, as proof of his love. Indeed when Mbálaka was married, he killed one of his wives, cut her into pieces, and sent the "meat" to his son-in-law as "the first hen" that his wife would prepare for him. But he did not have to pay the indemnity because the victim's clan was too weak to attempt a war; they did not dare to make a claim and, in order to avoid even greater misfortunes, they resigned themselves to this revolting ignominy.

Article V

Relations Between the Husband and His Wife's Family

As has already been said, kinship by marriage is called likilo, and relatives by marriage are called bokilo, bakilo. Mbótsolo is a term of respect for very close relatives by marriage (father-in-law, mother-in-law, sometimes brother-in-law or sister-in-law). When there is a considerable age difference between two affinal relatives, the elder one sometimes calls the younger bokilówalé. This happens most frequently when the son-in-law is so young that he can still be considered a child. This term can even be used by an elder brother

352
322 [103] Occasionally one sees a native stool, made as described above, but with a kind of back rest chopped out of one piece.

342
177 The Negro who wishes to move with the times makes for his house a chair out of bamboo in the European style: some sticks stuck in the ground, a mat of split bamboo laid over them, and the gentleman can spend his days in dolce far niente [pleasant idleness].

352
322 A table made in the same way (otherwise unknown to the Negro) completes the furnishing of his hut.

One does not need to be an expert, either, in order to be able to make a Negro bed. Some straight sticks are chopped out of the mombambo (umbrella tree). These are placed lengthwise and then across, on top of each other, trimmed a bit at the edges so that the whole thing fits more or less, and it is then bound together with some split lianas. In this way the Negro has made a bed; this favorite [435] piece of furniture is finished for a sale price of 5 to 10 mitako.

The making of beds could be classed among the Mongo trades. [437] I once saw, in the interior, ten of these beds, large and small spread out along the side of the road for sale.

I was assured that the owner of the beds was the very best bed-maker of the village. Of course, I raised my hat to such an important personage.

The ekoba, the bed stool, is also indispensable. These ekoba take the place of our pillows and are made of one piece, formed to the shape of the head. It is a somewhat hard pillow, but the Negro head is hard and can put up with it; the fellow sleeps without having to be rocked.

322
252 To prepare his food he needs some mortars and pestles, and these are made of wood. He uses hardwood for these utensils so that the mortars do not wear away from the constant pounding.

In addition, the Negro makes his oars, his bow and arrows for
322 the hunt, and the lokombi. The lokombi is a flat, oblong, hollowed
534 block of wood over which some pegs are stretched [sic]. He plucks these with his fingers, thus producing a monotonous sound. This so-called musical instrument is the constant companion of the young man and accompanies him on his long treks through the Evenaar forest and on his visits to friends and acquaintances.

and that he may have no more than a month or perhaps a year in which to live and will surely die speedily.

The special objects attaching to the office of *nkumu*, among these the hat, *mentele*, and stool, *mbete*, are at the same time subject to similar magical arts to determine whether they may be produced for the new *nkumu*'s use. They are not present, being in the possession of the *mulembe* which will appoint him, but are mentioned by name. Apart from the *mentele*, no further ceremony is required to identify these objects with their future owner.

The *mingo* ended, the *Nkumu Akulo* smears black *mbili* all over his body again, before the rites begin to determine which of his wives is to be known as *Nsumu*, the one who will be closest to her husband throughout his days. For this, magic formulae (*bimenge*, sing. *menge*) are used. All the wives sit round in a circle and the *nkanga* places some irritant such as ground pepper in the eyes of all the women. The wife whose eyes stream most and whose discomfort is also accompanied by a violent shaking of the body is known to be *Nsumu*. Here again, lying is believed to be out of the question, for the shaking of the body is something that is supposed to be impossible of simulation, the real being easily distinguished by all from the false. *Nsumu* is now stripped of all clothing and her body smeared by the *nkanga* with yellow clay on one side, and with white on the other. A belt of leaves is put round her waist and a small bit of cloth between the legs with each end attached to the belt. Near by a gourd with 'medicine' in it has been standing ready for the next step in the ceremonies, and this is now smeared with white clay, a parrot's feather stuck in the neck, and handed to *Nsumu*, who receives it in one hand. Into the other hand is put a section of plantain stalk, into one end of which has been stuck a parrot's feather. A third feather is placed in her mouth so that she cannot speak, greet anyone, or eat. She is now tied with a cord which is held by one of the young men attending *Nkumu Akulo*. At this point of the procedure the *nkanga* states his price for his work, which will be in the neighbourhood of one hundred brass rods, worth to-day about fifty francs, but formerly double that amount. The future *nkumu*, accompanied as before, leaves for the village of the *mulembe*. *Nsumu* starts off at a tremendous pace, for she is now imbued with a sort of frenzied strength, and for this reason has been tied up and put in charge of a strong young man, otherwise she would be off so fast that no one could catch her, and would go into the forest, where she would live for days unseen.

In the village of the *mulembe* the party all sit in an *nkanga* belonging to one of the elders. This is the place where the Tumba men really live—their houses are just sleeping and cooking establishments, but the *nkanga*, having a roof for shade and no walls, is the place where the men congregate and spend their leisure time. It is also the site of the village smithy, which takes up one end. Here, then, *Nkumu Akulo* and his party sit for a day and a night, and neither he nor *Nsumu* may eat food or drink wine during this period. Games are played by the *mulembe*—mock battles, dances, and songs chiefly of battle, and before the first streaks of dawn appear the group in the *nkanga* begins to march up and down the village singing.

At dawn the whole party, accompanied by a large crowd, make their way to a place in the bush where there is an elevation of some sort. Here *Nkumu Akulo* climbs up and takes his stand, accompanied by *Nsumu*. Now the *mulembe* choose the *Bilepe*

Now the molemba loose the Bilogo

624 *Oñolo*, a young woman of their own number, who will thereafter be known by this
[533] name. She is an official cymbalist and must always begin beating before others may join in. In reality the members of the *molombo* have decided beforehand who shall be chosen for this position, and the woman of their choice now takes her stand on the elevation together with *Nkumu Akulo* and his wife, *Nsumu*.

624 The member of the *molombo* whose right it is by inheritance to place the *montolo*
392 (see Plates) upon the head of the *nkumu* now comes forward with it. This hat, about twelve inches in height, is woven of raffia and cylindrical in shape, but the brim, instead of being at the base, encircles the top of the crown. It is usually decorated with a burnished brass plate attached to the front, and perhaps a second one behind, and in these modern days it is quite in style to hang a row of safety pins from the 'helm' or 'halo' encircling the crown. When the *nkumu* is the first of his line, the *montolo* is purchased by him, but in the case of succession it is that used by the deceased predecessor, and has been kept by the *molombo* until this time. It is his badge of office and sign of authority. The bringing out of the *montolo* is an occasion for
624 merriment. *Nkumu Akulo* calls for his *montolo*, but the *molombo* tease and tantalize him and ask for money. The amount is a fixed sum, but *Nkumu Akulo* pays out at first but a few rods, is teased for more, and so on until he has provided the total amount, usually about one hundred. The member of the *molombo* whose duty it is to place the *montolo* on the head of the *nkumu* begins to tease the crowd. He chooses various names by which the *nkumu* might be called, everybody knowing all the time what his name must be. He asks the people, 'Shall we call him so-and-so?' 'We refuse', reply the people. 'Or so-and-so?' 'We refuse.' And each time names whereby *nkumu* are known are repeated. Finally the correct name is given, as, 'Shall we call him *Nkumu Lokondolo*?' and the crowd roars its approval, 'Ooooo!' The *montolo* then being placed on *Nkumu Akulo*'s head he now becomes *Nkumu* and leaps down among the crowd, who bear him off to their village with rejoicing. In the choice of names, the first *nkumu* in a village is known as *Nkumu Lokondolo*. If there is another section of the village with an *nkumu* of its own, he must take another name, such as *Nkumu Ijoli Bokonga*. Successors must always take the names of their predecessors whatever their own personal names may be. An *nkumu* chosen by a *molombo*
[554] which is also the *nsumu molombo*, the hereditary owner of the land, is known as *Nkumu o Bitindi* (*Nkumu* of the heels), for he occupies a more important position than his fellows, and is thus the support which holds up the whole group of *nkumu* chosen by other *molombo*.

624 The *nkumu* is borne off to his *nsongo*, his residence, which in this case is temporary, to be replaced later by a permanent one. The *nsongo* comprises the whole unit of
● 392 buildings for the *nkumu*, including his own sleeping quarters, the houses for his wives, the *ekunga* where he spends the daylight hours, and a row of houses for his children. His *ekunga* and his own sleeping quarters are screened from the public gaze, making
[351] a place known as *ifuma*. In the case of a new *nkumu* the screen is temporary, but when the permanent *nsongo* is built, a permanent *ifuma* is made by planting umbrella trees (*molombo*, sing. *molombo*) in a rectangular or circular fashion. Here, sheltered
624 from intrusion, the *nkumu* remains in retirement (*andi*) for a month.[1] While he remains

[1] *Andi* refers to the sitting of a hen on eggs, *nkumu* at this juncture of the ceremonies, the seclusion of a woman after childbirth, or of the

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba

inches long and two inches in width, numbering up to seven are brought and attached to the back of her *lombeo* by folding them over it.[1]

The first male child which was born to the *nkumu* before he acceded to the office is known as *Iyumi Nkui*. If he has none, then the right to this name passes to the first male child to be born to his younger brothers. Any child born on the day that the *nkumu* is given his *montolo* is also called *Iyumi*; if a male he will be *Mola Iyumi*, if a female, *Mpumbe Iyumi*.[2] These children must not see the *nkumu* until they are old enough to know his name and greet him properly, and so they are taken to some village other than the one in which he has his residence. When such children are considered old enough to take up residence in the village of the *nkumu* it is an occasion for revelry, a big dance, *nteko*, is held, and there is a feast. The child, *Iyumi*, is brought to the village of the *nkumu* with rejoicing, and this is a signal for everybody desiring to do so to help himself to anything belonging to the *nkumu*. Goats and fowls may be killed and eaten, sugar-cane rooted up, bananas, plantains, and other crops growing near by seized for food. Because of this custom the *nkumu* will take precautions and send his livestock, at least, off to some other village in order not to lose more than he can help.[3]

The *nyemba*, the singer or singers, and the *ntotii*, the praisers already mentioned, remain with the *nkumu* during his period of seclusion. Added to these is *ntomba lokombi*, the bearer of the *lokombi*, a stringed instrument played with the fingers, similar to a bass viol in its general appearance.

Inside the *ipasa* during the seclusion of the *nkumu*, few people have the right of entrance, but as one enters the *ekunga* where the daylight hours are spent, one finds the couch of the *nkumu* on the left and towards the rear. On the same side and towards the front are seated the *ntomba lokombi* and the *nyemba*. *Nsomo*'s couch is to the right of, and parallel to, that of the *nkumu*, but still to the left of the centre posts. To the right of her couch is the fire in the centre, and beyond the fire on the right side is a couch for the *mamai*, likewise somewhat to the rear, with a space in front for the *ntotii*.

The month's seclusion being completed, the *nkumu* prepares to buy the homage of the village. *Nsomo* gets rid of her decorative colours, and assumes ordinary attire, becoming like any other of the wives, and is ready to take up all the usual duties of a wife, whether in the garden or at the house. The people are called to come and render to the *nkumu* their homage and praise. The men come to the *ipasa*, are admitted to the presence of their *nkumu* and seat themselves on the bare earth with their legs wide apart and facing him. They then, without uttering a word, greet him in the

[1] The *lombeo* is a belt which used to be worn by Tumba women encircling the buttocks, and this was used to attach their only garment, the *ekwe* among the Bongindo, this being a short loin cloth, or an *ngunga* among other groups, this being a woven cloth strip worn between the legs.

[2] When a new *nkumu* assumes office, one already in office will take this opportunity of getting most of his sons named *Iyumi*. He takes them to the *molondo* of the new *nkumu*, and having placed a bracelet of cowrie shells on the right wrist, and sometimes one on the right ankle, asks the member of the *molondo* whose right it is to give away the *montolo* to name these sons *Mamai* (pl. of '*Iyumi*'). This man will then take such a son, and presenting him to the people introduce him by giving him a name, and following with praise as, '*Ow Iyumi Lomue, bototo!*' and the crowd replies with the customary '*Boso!*'

[3] It is well to remember that not every individual bearing names associated with the institution of the *nkumu* is directly concerned with it. With the practice of 'resurrecting' dead relatives by naming new-born children after them, such names as these become widespread.